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ぐっ
WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING?
THIS ...
?
LOOK!!
ガッ
!?
YOU CAUGHT ME AND NOW WHAT?

W. KON
KYOSIDA
!?
THAT'S
...

...DON'T
TELL ME
THAT'S THE
BOOK THAT
WAS ON THE
BOOKSHELF
NEAR THE
COUNTER...?

THIS
PERSON
WAS ...
SHOP-
LIFTING?
.....AH
.....

I WANT YOU TO LOOK CARE-FULLY.
.....
THAT'S ABOUT IT.
I DON'T DO IT BECAUSE I LIKE IT...
THERE ARE TIMES WHEN OLD PEOPLE LIKE ME HAVE TO DO THOSE THINGS.
YOU FEEL PITY FOR ME, RIGHT?
AT LEAST A BIT.

NOT ALL OLD PEOPLE ARE IMPUDENT OLD FARTS LIKE YOU!
BECAUSE YOU'RE OLD?
WHAT THE FUCK IS THAT REASON!?
THAT'S BOTHER-SOME...
SHOULD I REALLY REPORT HER TO THE POLICE...?
ゴゴゴゴ
ガッ!!
IF YOU STEAL BOOKS, THEN YOU'D EVEN SELL YOUR OWN CHILDREN!
T/N: LITERALLY WRITTEN IF YOU STEAL BOOKS THEN YOU'RE A MOTHER CHICKEN THAT WILL SELL HER CHICKS.
grabs

BUT ANY MORE THAN THIS AND...
!!
WAIT ...
PLEASE CALM DOWN.
THE HELL...
LEMME GO...
WELL THEN, IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME.
.....
...WAI —!!!

SHE'S NOT HERE...
HOW CAN SHE BE SO FAST FOR SOMEONE HER AGE?
THAT WOMAN
IS PROBABLY A RECIDIVIST.
YOU ARE AT FAULT TOO, YOU SHOULD BE WATCHING MORE CAREFULLY.
ISN'T THERE A MEANING TO A SALESPERSON?

WHERE ...
IN THE WORLD IS THIS PERSON FROM?
I'M THANKFUL THAT HE HELPED ME PREVENT THE BOOK FROM BEING STOLEN, BUT
I DON'T REALLY UNDERSTAND WHY HE IS LECTURING ME...
...I'M SORRY.
!
AH.
?
A REGULAR CUSTOMER...?
!
I'M A REGULAR CUSTOMER.
MY NAME IS SHIDA.
.....
WHAT'S THIS?

I'M SORRY,
RIGHT NOW THE PERSON IN CHARGE ISN'T HERE SO IF YOU COULD WAIT UNTIL TOMORROW.
I KNOW THIS ALREADY.
AH...
PUR-CHASED ...
YOU'LL UNDERSTAND ONCE YOU LOOK AT THEM. THOSE ARE BOOKS I PURCHASED.
WITH THESE I CAN GO AND SEE SHINOKA-WA-SAN!!!
PURCHASED!? DON'T TELL ME...
Shinokawa-san!

IT SEEMS LIKE THIS SHOP IS UNDERGOING A RAPID CUSTOMER TURNOVER.
SPEAKING OF HER, DIDN'T SHE CHANGE A BIT?
THIS SHYNESS OF HERS AS WELL AS THIS BOOK-STORE ARE GETTING RARE NOWADAYS.
THE ONE IN CHARGE HAS HURT HERSELF AND IS NOW IN THE HOSPITAL, AND THAT'S WHY YOU JOINED RECENTLY?
YOU'RE ALREADY DOING A GOOD JOB.

LOOK, A TICKET.
... WELL, THAT SHOULD DO IT.
HUP
ISN'T THERE SOMETHING WEIRD HERE?
WHAT?
...HE KNOWS EVEN MORE STUFF THAN ME...
...TCH.
IT'S A LITTLE BIT ABOVE THE NATIONAL HIGHWAY THAT GOES ALONG THE SEASIDE.
... HAAA
SO YOU KNOW WHERE THE HIKIJI RIVER IS, RIGHT? THEN ON THE SIDE OF THE KUGENUMA COAST, DID YOU KNOW THAT THERE'S A BRIDGE?
FUJISAWA PREFECTURE, KUGENUMA COAST... UNDER THE BRIDGE?
THERE IS ALSO NO PHONE NUMBER...

T/N: MEANING IS EXPLAINED A BIT LATER, I'LL LET IT LIKE THIS FOR NOW

CAN YOU TAKE THESE TO THE HOSPITAL TO BE ASSESSED?
HOWEVER YOU LOOK AT IT, THEY'RE PRETTY WORN-OUT,
SO I'M SURE THAT WILL PLEASE HER.
NO, WELL ...
WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY "SEDORI"?
THEN,
ズイッ
NOW THAT I'VE DELIVERED THOSE BOOKS, COULD YOU DO ME A FAVOR?
I WOULD LIKE YOU TO TELL HER SOMETHING FOR ME.
....WHA-
THAT'S JUST THE WHIM OF A REGULAR CUSTOMER.
THAT'S FINE RIGHT?

...SO IT'S ABOUT
A DISCUSSION I HAD THE DAY BEFORE YESTERDAY...
ㅋ
ㅋ

I SENT YOU A MAIL
EARLIER ABOUT THE BOOK...
ガラ....
IT'S GOURA.
I'M COMING IN.
YES? ...
!!
SHE JUST TOOK A BATH!!
ダッ
.....SO-SORRY,
I'LL WAIT IN THE CORRIDOR.

N... NO,
IT'S OKAY ...
R... RIGHT NOW
I THOUGHT THAT MAYBE...
YOU'D TAKE A BATH A BIT LATER...
I'M... SO SORRY...
NO,
I'M THE ONE WHO SHOULD APOLOGIZE.
SO YOU COULD GET INTO
THE HOS-PITAL'S BATHS?
COUGH
...I GOT SOME HELP ...
I SEE.
A NURSE PROBABLY CAME TO HELP HER...

I THOUGHT THAT SHE'D HAVE LOST SOME WEIGHT...
BUT THAT WAS PROBABLY MY OWN MISUNDER-STANDING...
TCH,
DO-
DO YOU WANT TO TAKE A LOOK AT THE BOOKS?
AM I STUPID OR WHAT! WHAT IF SHE NOTICES?
...WAHH

HEY,
LET'S TAKE A LOOK!
THAT'S AMAZ-ING!
ズイ
ズッ
!?
我らが共通の友
我らが共通の友
我らが共通の友
書物の出現 下
書物の出現 上
二笑亭綺譚

WHA-
REALLY!?
NO,
THEY MAY BE WORTH 20 OR 30 DOLLARS EACH.

...ARE THOSE RARE BOOKS?

THOSE BOOKS DON'T ACTUALLY LOOK ALL THAT OLD...
事物の出現
我らが共通の友

SHIDA ...?
ほう……
AND THIS PARTICULAR PRINTING WAS FOUND AT AN OLD BOOK MARKET.

SHIDA- WELL, A CUSTOMER CAME AND BROUGHT IT...
HE LOOKED SUSPICIOUS, BUT
MAYBE HE REALLY DOES HAVE A SENSE FOR BOOKS.

EVEN IF THEY ARE FAIRLY POPULAR,
THOSE WORKS WON'T BE REISSUED.
BUT THEY ARE NOWHERE NEAR 20 OR 30 DOLLARS.
THEN, YOU CAN FIND AND READ THE HARD-COVER VERSION.

GOOD FEATURE?
THAT PERSON ...
WHAT KIND OF PERSON IS HE?

SEDORI-YA ...
HE IS A SEDORI-YA.
DIDN'T YOU SAY SO YOURSELF?

AH!
I WAS SURE OF IT!
BECAUSE THAT'S HIS GOOD FEATURE!

¥1000
1000
IN ORDER FOR THE BOOKSTORE TO BE ABLE TO SELL THE BOOKS AT A CHEAP PRICE
WE BUY THEM DIRECTLY FROM PEOPLE.
EVERY DAY, SHIDA-SAN ALSO BUYS BOOKS FROM PEOPLE THROUGHOUT THE REGION.

I'VE GOT THE CHANCE TO ASK SOMEBODY THAT PROBABLY KNOWS
I DID SAY IT, BUT...
WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY SEDO-RI-YA?

IT'S THE FIRST TIME I HEAR ABOUT SUCH BUSINESS... THERE ARE PEOPLE MAKING A LIVING FROM THIS.
WHY DID HE SAY "SEDORI"?
THERE ARE SEVERAL THEORIES, BUT WHEN YOU PICK A BOOK ON A SHELF, LOOKING AT ITS BACK COVER,
IT'S CALLED "SEDORI".
SHIDA-SAN TAKES THE LEADING PART IN FINDING BOOKS THAT AREN'T PRINTED PAPERBACK ANYMORE...
MAYBE HE'S EVEN MORE KNOWLEDGE-ABLE THAN I AM.
IT'S JUST THE WHIM OF A REGULAR CUSTOMER. THAT'S FINE, RIGHT?
IN SHORT
SHIDA HAS GOT SOME SORT OF HOUSE JOB, SELLING RARE BOOKS HE FOUND DIGGING AROUND. SHOULD WE BE THANKFUL ...?
...IT WOULD HAVE BEEN BETTER IF HE COULD HAVE BEEN A BIT MORE SERIOUS.
SERIOUSLY...
T/N: SE = BACK, DORI COMES FROM TORI = PICK / TAKE
HO...
HOW DO YOU KNOW?
!?
DIDN'T SHIDA-SAN ASK YOU TO DO HIM A FAVOR?

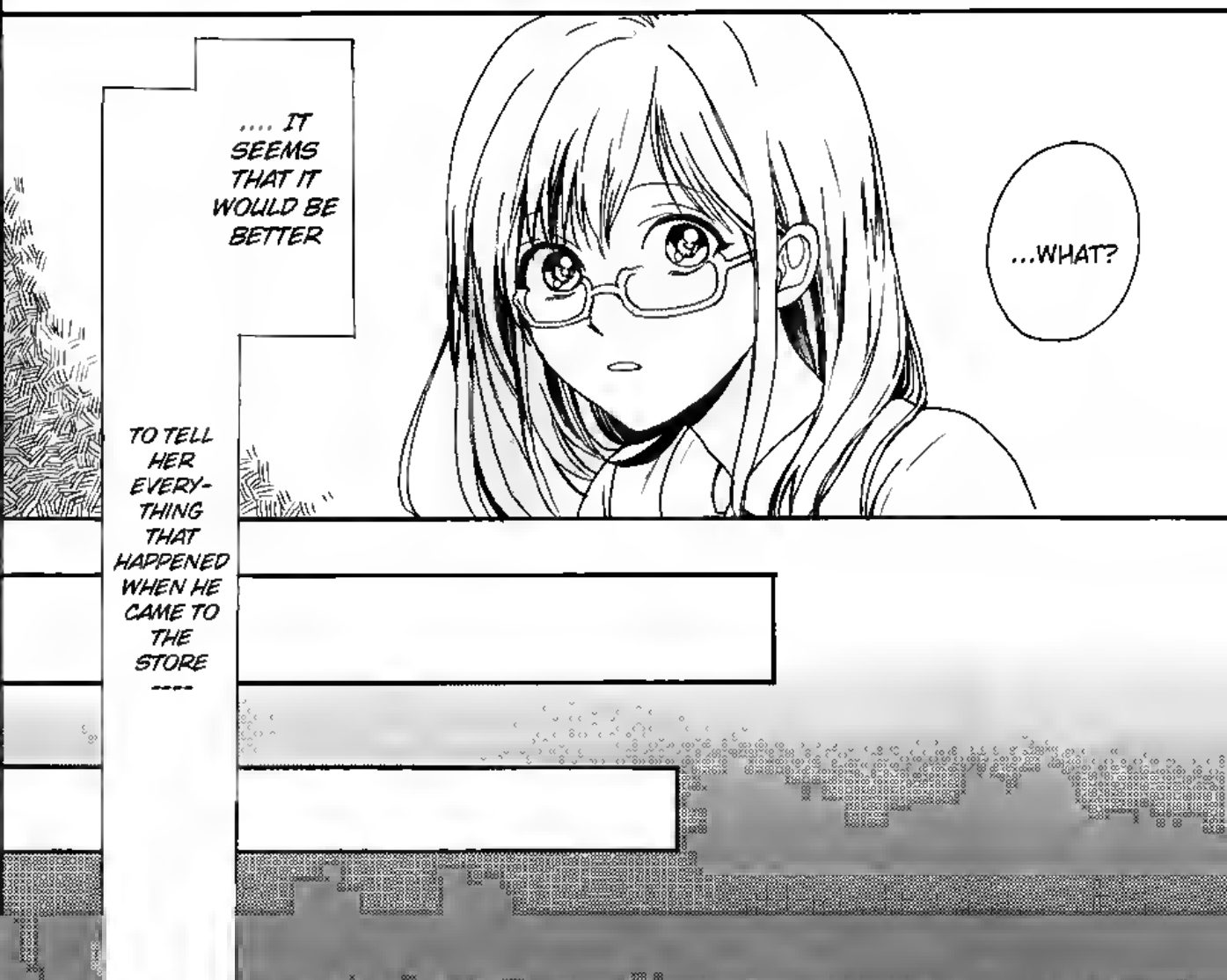
.....
AM I WRONG?
HE WOULD LIKE YOU TO LEARN A BIT MORE ABOUT THE BOOK RESALE BUSINESS, ESPECIALLY THE PAPER-BACK ONE...
EACH TIME HE COMES TO SELL A GOOD BOOK
IS MORE OR LESS LIKE THIS.
A BIT ---... NO,
IT WAS REALLY A WEIRD FAVOR TO ASK.
I ALREADY KNOW A BIT ABOUT THE OUT-OF-PRINT BOOKS, BUT..
IF YOU SAY SO THEN YEAH...
SINCE WHEN DID WE LOSE TRACK OF WHAT WE WERE TALKING ABOUT?

T/N: SHINCHOU IS MAGAZINE AND PUBLISHER IN JAPAN

THOSE ARE THE STORIES PUBLISHED BY SHINCHOU, AND THEIR FIRST EDITION WAS IN THE 30TH YEAR OF THE SHOWA ERA, RIGHT?
KOYAMA KIYOSHI'S "OCHIBO HIROHI AND ST. ANDERSEN" PAPERBACK EDITION...
ERM...

T/N: 30TH YEAR OF THE SHOWA ERA = 1955

PLEASE !!
"THE BOOK HAS BEEN STOLEN SO PLEASE HELP ME FIND IT!!"
THIS IS WHAT...
THE REQUEST WAS.
WELL,
THIS IS...
AND THAT'S A PRETTY RARE THING...
THERE SHOULD BE SOME IN THE SHOP'S STOCK


.... IT SEEMS THAT IT WOULD BE BETTER
TO TELL HER EVERY-THING THAT HAPPENED WHEN HE CAME TO THE STORE ----
...WHAT?

WELL, I DON'T HAVE MUCH MONEY, NOR AM I YOUNG, BUT
I QUITE LIKE THIS LIFESTYLE.
BLABLAB
ALABLA
BUT LIKE THIS, EVEN IF I DON'T GET ANY HELP FROM OTHER PEOPLE I CAN KEEP ON LIVING.
WHEN IT COMES TO OLD PEOPLE, FOR EXAMPLE THOSE THAT SHOPLIFT LIKE THE OLD WOMAN, NOT EVERYBODY ACTUALLY BLAMES THEM YOU SEE.
SO ON MY SIDE, I DECIDED THAT WHATEVER HAPPENED, THERE WOULD BE A PAPER-BACK THAT I WOULD NEVER SELL.
WELL, TO ME IT'S LIKE A PRO-TECTIVE CHARM.
I ALWAYS CARRY IT WITH ME, INSIDE A BAG.
THIS WAY I'D ALWAYS BE ABLE TO READ IT, YOU SEE.
YOU TOO MUST HAVE SOME BOOK THAT'S REALLY IMPORTANT TO YOU, RIGHT?
NO ...
DO YOU READ ?
TO ME, THIS IMPORTANT BOOK WOULD BE THE COLLECTION OF STORIES FROM KOYAMA KIYOSHI CALLED "OCHIBO HIROHI AND ST. ANDERSEN".
....AND
IT WAS STOLEN
THE DAY BEFORE YESTER-DAY.

I WAS THERE DURING THE AFTERNOON THAT DAY.
OVER THERE IS KOBUKU-ROYA'S RAILWAY CROSSING, RIGHT?

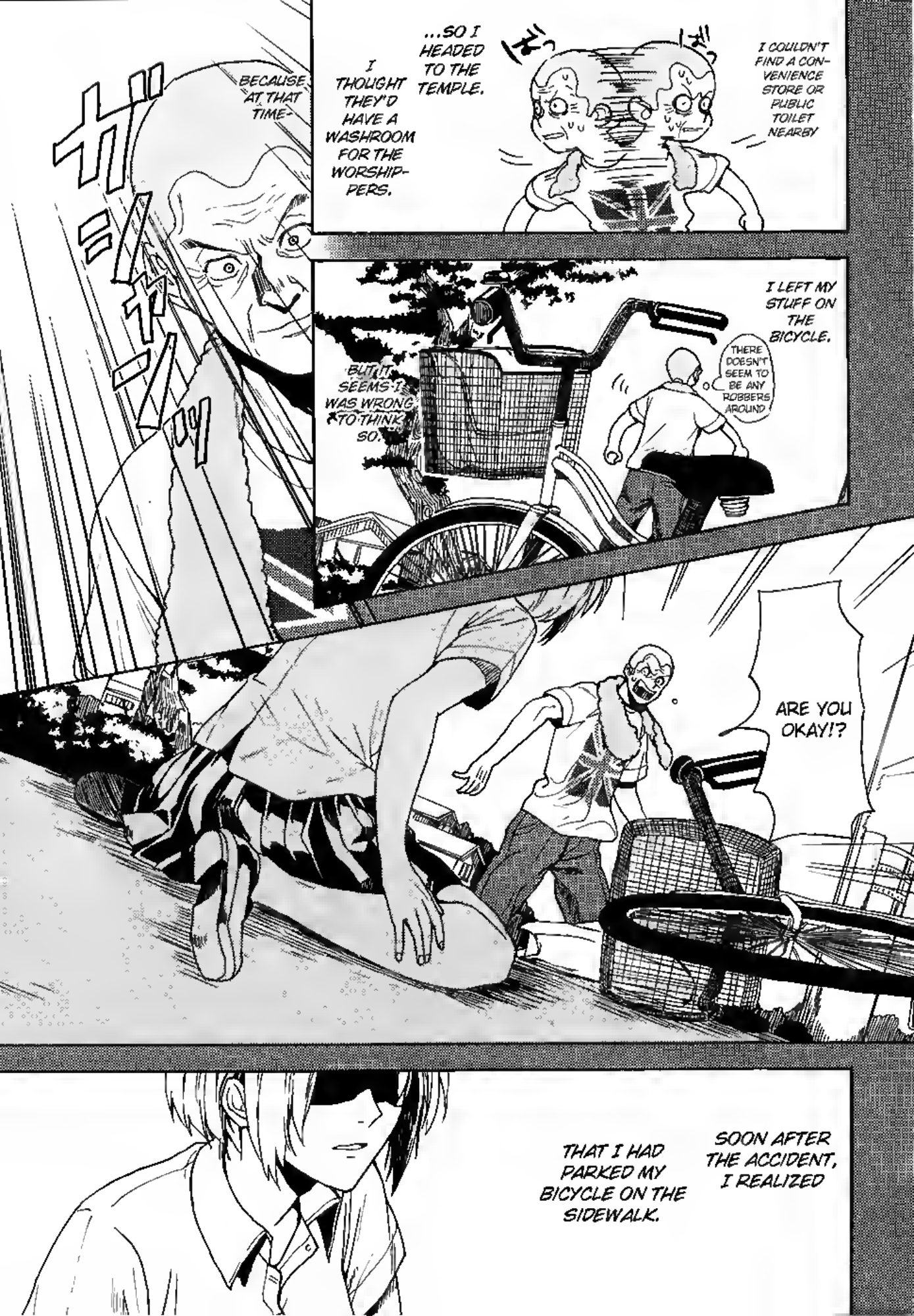
……
YOU …

?
IS THAT ONLY THE LAST VOLUME?
THAT'S WHERE I GOT THE LAST VOLUME OF "SHOMOTSU NO SHUTSUKEN" THAT I BROUGHT TODAY.
書物の出現

……
WHY AT THAT PLACE …?
AHHH
MY JOB, MY JOB.

ARE YOU REALLY LISTEN-ING?
ONCE THE PAPERBACK EDITIONS AREN'T PRINTED ANYMORE, GOD, IT'S OBVIOUS IT BECOMES HARDER TO GET YOUR HANDS ON THE LATER VOLUMES!!
YOU ONLY BOUGHT THE FIRST VOLUMES SO IF YOU FAIL TO BUY THE LAST ONES, THEN THERE'S NO WAY AROUND IT, RIGHT?
THE NUMBER OF LAST VOLUMES AROUND IS VERY SMALL SO THEY ARE THE ONLY ONES WITH A BIGGER VALUE!!
ブバッ
LACK OF STUDYING

BECAUSE IT'S NOT A BIG ONE, THERE WERE NO PEOPLE AND IT WAS REALLY QUIET.
IT MUST HAVE BEEN A LITTLE BEFORE 2 P.M.
I HAD AN APPOINT-MENT IN FRONT OF THE TEMPLE.
... WELL
THEN ...
OF COURSE I HAD ALSO CARRIED THE BOOK BY KOYAMA KIYOSHI WITH ME.
THERE WAS A BIG PINE TREE SO I THOUGHT ABOUT READING A BOOK THERE.
MY STOMACH STARTED TO HURT.
but..
Ahh I wanna eat something good
GRRR


I COULDN'T FIND A CONVENIENCE STORE OR PUBLIC TOILET NEARBY
...SO I HEADED TO THE TEMPLE.
I THOUGHT THEY'D HAVE A WASHROOM FOR THE WORSHIPPERS.
BECAUSE, AT THAT TIME-
ガシャン
I LEFT MY STUFF ON THE BICYCLE.
THERE DOESN'T SEEM TO BE ANY ROBBERS AROUND.
BUT IT SEEMS I WAS WRONG TO THINK SO.
ARE YOU OKAY!?
SOON AFTER THE ACCIDENT, I REALIZED
THAT I HAD PARKED MY BICYCLE ON THE SIDEWALK.

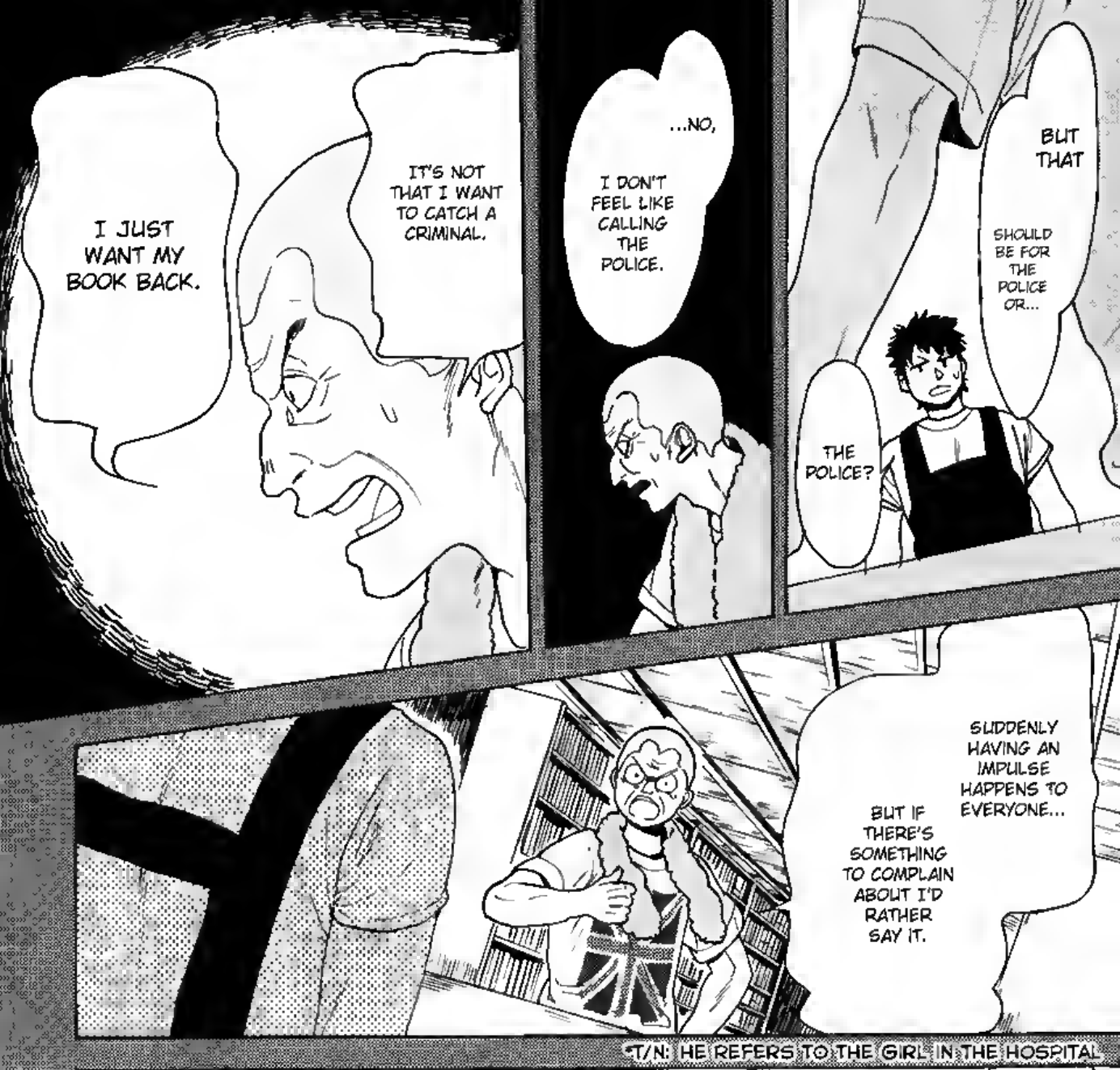
... SORRY, BUT
COULD YOU PLEASE PICK THE BICYCLE BACK UP?!
I DIDN'T GET TO KNOW AS FAR AS WHAT WAS IN THE BAG, BUT SHE LOOKED LIKE SHE HAD DROPPED SOMETHING IMPORTANT.
SHE JUST SEARCHED INSIDE A SMALL PAPER BAG THAT SEEMED QUITE HIGH-CLASS.
SHE DIDN'T EVEN LOOK BACK MY WAY.

STARTED RUNNING.
THEN SHE SUDDENLY PICKED UP SOMETHING AND
MY APPOINTMENT HAD ARRIVED AND I HAD PICKED MY STUFF UP.
... ANYWAY, WHEN I CAME BACK FROM THE WASHROOM
THANK YOU.
I COULD SEE THAT THE THING SHE PICKED UP WAS A PAPERBACK...
HONESTLY, SHE HAD A BIT OF A STRANGE EXPRESSION.
I FINALLY ACCEPTED THE FACT THAT IT HAD BEEN STOLEN.
AFTER THIS, WHEN I CHECKED MY LUGGAGE, THE BOOK BY KOYAMA KIYOSHI WAS NOWHERE TO BE FOUND.

IT SEEMS SHE HAD GONE TOWARDS THE BUS STOP ACROSS THE ROAD,
BUT THERE WAS ALREADY NO ONE THERE.
IF I AM TO TRUST MY FRIEND, IT WAS THE TALL GIRL FROM BEFORE.
SHE HAD GOTTEN ON THE BUS WITH IT.
ANYWAY,
OF COURSE SHE DIDN'T LEAVE THE BOOK.
AFTER I LEFT MY FRIEND, I SEARCHED OVER THE AREA, BUT

AND FOR THIS, I'LL ASK THIS SHOP FOR HELP.
ド
ン
I WILL GET BACK MY ALL-IMPORTANT BOOK

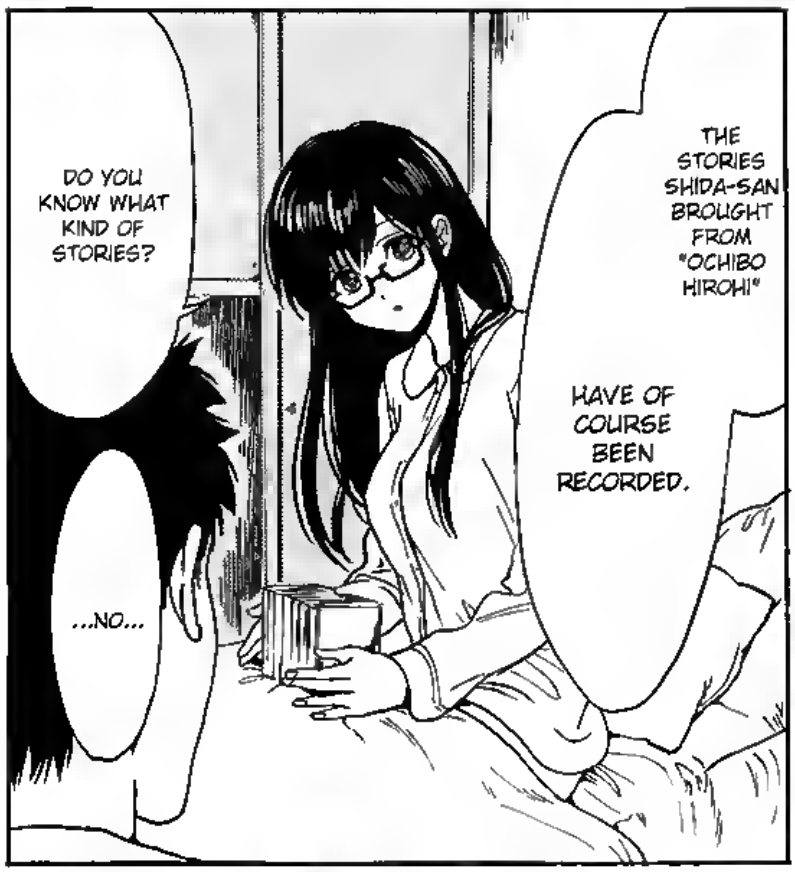
...
BUT
WHY DID THAT GIRL STEAL YOUR BOOK...?
WHA-?
ISN'T IT BECAUSE IT'S A HABIT?
SHE MUST HAVE MISUNDERSTOOD AND THOUGHT THAT BECAUSE IT'S OLD IT MUST HAVE VALUE.
I'M SURE SHE WAS GOING TO SELL IT TO GET SOME MONEY....
AT LEAST THAT'S WHAT I THOUGHT, BUT...
THE CLOSEST SECOND-HAND STORE FROM THE TEMPLE IS THIS ONE.
SO IF SHE COMES TO SELL IT
YOU'LL BUY IT FOR ME, RIGHT?
AND THEN I'LL COME TO BUY IT BACK!!
ガーッ!


I JUST WANT MY BOOK BACK.
IT'S NOT THAT I WANT TO CATCH A CRIMINAL.
...NO, I DON'T FEEL LIKE CALLING THE POLICE.
THE POLICE?
BUT THAT SHOULD BE FOR THE POLICE OR...
BUT IF THERE'S SOMETHING TO COMPLAIN ABOUT I'D RATHER SAY IT.
SUDDENLY HAVING AN IMPULSE HAPPENS TO EVERYONE...

*T/N: HE REFERS TO THE GIRL IN THE HOSPITAL

IT WAS
THAT KIND OF SPEECH, BUT...
.....
WHAT SHOULD WE DO?

I ONLY REALIZED THAT AFTER HE ASKED US FOR HELP CATCHING THE ROBBER.
SHIDA-SAN REALLY LOVES KOYAMA KOYISHI, I GUESS.


DO YOU KNOW WHAT KIND OF STORIES?
...NO...
THE STORIES SHIDA-SAN BROUGHT FROM "OCHIBO HIROHI"
HAVE OF COURSE BEEN RECORDED.

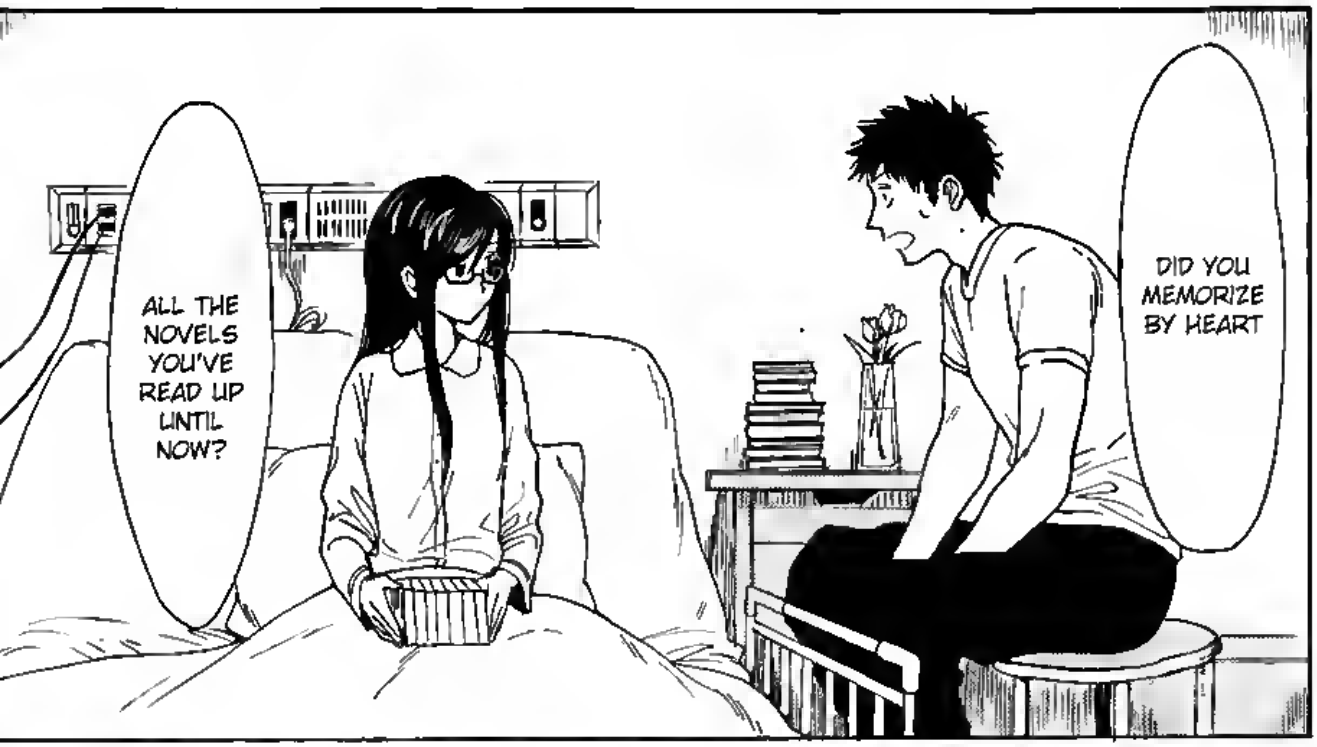
BESIDES, IT WAS ONLY A SIMPLE EXPLANATION BUT...
...WHA-?
BUT IT'S NOT LIKE WE HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH HIS PROBLEM, RIGHT?

THE MODEL WOULD BE A REAL, GREAT AUTHOR, RIGHT?
OF COURSE, FOR A POOR NOVELIST THAT MAKES BLAND STORIES

AND WHEN HE OPENS IT...
AH
SHE GIVES HIM A PRESENT,
HE IS THE OWNER OF A SMALL SECOND-HAND BOOKSTORE AND ONE DAY HE MEETS A YOUNG WOMAN.
...
SORRY,
I WAS DAY-DREAMING.
HN
IN THE BEGINNING OF "OCHIBO HIROHI" THERE IS A PASSAGE LIKE THIS:
WELL... LET'S GET BACK TO OUR DIS-CUSSION.
I'M CURIOUS
HE IS THE OWNER OF THE SHOP AND HE GETS TO KNOW A YOUNG WOMAN...
IT'S GETTING INTEREST-ING BUT...

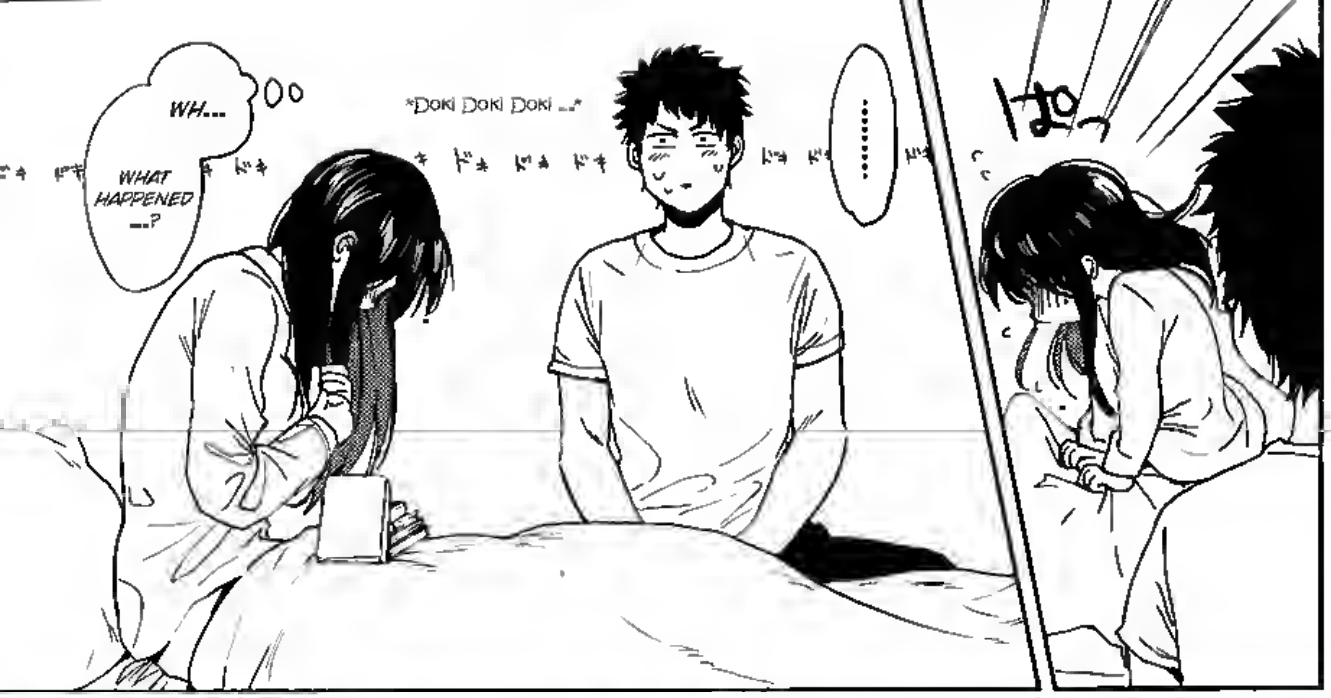
"IF I COULD, I WOULD LIKE TO PILE UP THE YEARS AS FAST AS I CAN.
MY HIPS WOULD BEND A BIT, BUT THERE'S NOTHING THAT CAN BE DONE ABOUT IT.
MAYBE AT THAT TIME THE BABY CHICKS THAT I WILL HAVE KEPT UNTIL THEN WILL BE MAKING THEIR OWN LIVING.
YET, GROWING OLD IS
NOT NE-CESARILY AGAINST EVERYONE'S WISH IN THIS SOCIETY."
.....

THAT IS INDEED WHAT SHIDA SAID TO THAT OLD WOMAN WHEN HE WAS ABOUT TO HIT HER,
BUT RATHER THAN THAT...


DID YOU MEMORIZE BY HEART
ALL THE NOVELS YOU'VE READ UP UNTIL NOW?

N-
NO WAY.
YOU ARE WRONG.
ALL OF THEM YOU SAY...
I JUST REMEMBER PAGES WHERE
THERE ARE GOOD PASSAGES.
EH!
ISN'T IT SUPER AMAZING?
I'VE NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE THIS!!

T/N: AAAAAAANNNND HE SCORED!


WH...
WHAT HAPPENED ...?
Doki Doki Doki ...
.....
Ha

I WAS HONEST IN WHAT I SAID.
UNTIL NOW SHE'S BEEN ACTING SAD, BUT NOW...
SHE SEEMS MAD.
A-
.....

A-
ANYWAY, LET'S HELP SHIDA-SAN.
...GOU-RA-SAN, WHAT ABOUT YOU?
PLEASE BE CAREFUL IF SOMEONE COMES TO SELL "OCHIBO HIRO-HI AND ST. ANDERSEN".
HOWEVER ...

I HAVE A QUESTION.
...A QUEST-ION?

DID THAT GIRL REALLY STEAL THE BOOK IN ORDER TO SELL IT?
SHE MIGHT BE LIKE SHIDA'S KIND OF BOOK DEALER,
OR SHE MIGHT SIMPLY BE A NORMAL PERSON THAT THOUGHT ABOUT MAKING MONEY SELLING THE BOOK.
THIS HAS STARTED TO PIQUE MY IN-TEREST.
I THINK THAT STEALING ONLY THIS PARTICULAR BOOK IS QUITE WEIRD.

SO IF ONE WANTED TO MAKE MONEY, WHY TAKE THIS BOOK ALONE?
....DON'T YOU THINK SO?
INDEED, THAT'S WEIRD ...
SHIDA-SAN HAD PLANS TO TRADE STOCKS WITH OTHER BOOK DEALERS IN THE AREA.
IN OTHER WORDS, HE WAS CARRYING GOODS THAT HAD A CERTAIN MONETARY VALUE.
!?
WHA-
WHA- WHAT'S UP?

THIS WAY, I DON'T THINK SHIDA-SAN'S BOOK IS EVER GOING TO COME BACK.
RATHER ...
HOW ABOUT WE LOOK FOR THIS WOMAN OUR-SELVES?
.....EH?

I DIDN'T THINK IT'D GO SO FAR.
YOU DON'T HAVE TO GO THAT FAR FOR THE SAKE OF THIS BOOK DEALER...
... HOW-EVER,
LET'S STOP,
BUT ...
stares
I CAN'T SAY IT...
IF I THINK ABOUT IT
THERE IS NO PURCHASING TO DO TO REPLENISH THE STOCK. THAT'S A PERFECT EXCUSE RIGHT THERE.
ADD THE FACT THAT
THIS WHOLE "CATCHING A CRIMINAL" THING IS AROUSING MY INTEREST.
..... I

I'LL DO IT!!
TRUTH IS
I TOO WAS THINKING THE SAME THING!!
I SAID IT WITH A STRONG SPIRIT.
THANK YOU SO MUCH!
....YOU'LL FORGIVE ME MY FAKED PASSION,
I'M SURE.
THE BEGINNING OF A MYSTERY
TO BE CONTINUED